

Appl. No. 09/886,030
Examiner: Hewitt, James M, Art Unit 3679
In response to the Office Action dated Jan. 31, 2003

Date: April 30, 2003
Attorney Docket No. 10111391

REMARKS

Claims 17-22 are pending. Claim 21 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 as being indefinite for failing to particularly point and distinctly claim the subject matter which the applicant regards as the invention. Claims 17 and 21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Walker (US 4,897,880), and claims 17-18 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Horvath et al (US 4,707,027). Claims 19 and 20 have been indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Drawing 7C is objected to.

Applicant requests that claims 17-18 and 21 be cancelled without prejudice. Claims 19 and 20 have been amended to overcome the rejections of the Examiner. Claim 22 has been amended to incorporate all of the limitations of its base and intervening claims. New claims 29-34 have been added. Reconsideration of this application as amended is respectfully requested in light of the amendments and remarks contained below.

Election/Restriction

In the Office Action, the Examiner acknowledges Applicant's election of Group V (claims 17-22) without traverse. In the paper, the Examiner further states that upon reevaluation, Group V should include only claims 17-21, while Group VI should include claims 22-23. Applicant notes that the Examiner made a telephone call to the prior attorney of record on January 16, 2003, expressing the desire to change the election of Group V from claims 17-22 to 17-21. Applicant further notes that the prior attorney of record did not consent to this change at that time. Applicant does not agree with this reconstitution of Group V to exclude claim 22, and takes this opportunity to respectfully traverse the Examiner's reconstitution of Group V to exclude claim 22 on the grounds that the Examiner has not established a prima facie case that examination of claim 22 in conjunction with claims 17-21 would constitute a serious burden by appropriate explanation of either separate classification, separate status in the art, or a different field of search. On the contrary, upon reevaluation of the original restriction, it is Applicant's belief that Group V should be combined with Group VI. Specifically, Figures 7A-7G illustrate an inflatable product and Figures 8A-8C illustrate an air pump assembly that can be assembled onto the inflatable product. It is Applicant's belief that the air pump assembly illustrated in Figures 8A-8C

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is a variant embodiment of the air pump 72 illustrated in Figures 7A-7G, and that examination of the variant embodiments would not constitute a serious burden on the Examiner.

In view of the Examiner's earlier restriction requirement, Applicant retains the right to present all non-elected claims in a divisional application(s).

Drawings

In the Office Action, the Examiner objects to Figure 7C on the basis that numeral "731" should instead be "741". Applicant submits herewith a replacement sheet for Figure 7C in which numeral "731" is replaced by numeral "741", as suggested by the Examiner.

In addition, Applicant submits a replacement sheet for Figure 7F to correct errors in the original figure. As disclosed on page 12, line 8-10 of the specification, when any of the microswitches 7312, 7322, 7412 or 7422 is turned on, a relay 75 is activated and turned on. Amended Figure 7F illustrates the circuit structure described by this disclosure.

Applicant submits that no new matter has been added by the amendments to the drawings.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant thanks the Examiner for his indication in the Office Action that claims 19 and 20 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 17-18 have been incorporated into claim 20. The Applicant therefore believes that claim 20 is in condition for allowance. Applicant submits that no new matter has been added by these amendments.

Claim 19

Claim 19 has been amended to recite an inflatable product including, *inter alia*, a switch circuit through which an air pump is activated by a first switch, wherein the switch circuit has a *second switch* turned on by the first switch when the first switch is turned on, and a relay activated to supply the air pump with power when the second switch is turned on. Support for this amendment can be found on page 11, line 19 to page 18, line 18 of the specification and in Figures 7A-7G. It is Applicant's belief that none of the prior art cited by the Examiner, when

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taken alone or in combination, teach an inflatable product having these recited features.
Applicant therefore submits that claim 19 is now in condition for allowance.

Claim 22

Claim 22 was not addressed in the pending Office Action. Claim 22 has been amended to incorporate all of the limitations its base and intervening claims. Applicant submits that, when taken alone or in combination, none of prior art cited by the Examiner teaches or suggests an inflatable product having all of the limitations recited in amended claim 22. Specifically, none of the prior art teach an inflatable product with an air pump having a first pair of electrodes and a second pair of electrodes, the air pump operating in a first direction when the first pair of electrodes contact each other, and the air pump operating in a second, reverse direction opposite to the first direction when the second pair of electrodes contact each other, wherein a first switch which opens a first valve to a first chamber controls the air pump to operate, and a second switch which opens a second valve to a second chamber also controls the air pump to operate. Therefore, it is Applicant's belief that claim 22 is properly allowable over the cited art.

New Claims 29-34

New claim 29 depends from claim 19 and recites that the second switch is a microswitch. In the pending Office Action, the Examiner indicated that claim 19 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. New claim 29 contains all the limitations of original claims 17, 18 and 19, and so it is Applicant's belief that claim 29 is in condition for allowance.

New claim 30 recites the inflatable product of claim 19 further including a second chamber; a second valve through which the air pump inflates the second chamber, and a third switch to activate the air pump and open the second valve, wherein the switch circuit has a fourth switch turned on by the third switch when the third switch is turned on, and the relay is activated to supply the air pump with power when the fourth switch is turned on. New claim 31 further recites that the fourth switch is a microswitch. Support for claims 30-31 can be found on page 11, line 19 to page 12, line 18 of the specification and in Figures 7A-7G. It is Applicant's belief that, when taken alone or in combination, none of prior art cited by the Examiner teaches or suggests an inflatable product having all of the limitations recited in claims 30-31.

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New claim 32 depends from claim 20 and is supported by the disclosure on page 11, line 19 to page 12, line 18 of the specification and in Figures 7A-7G. Insofar as new claim 32 depends from allowable claim 20, it is Applicant belief that claim 32 is in condition for allowance.

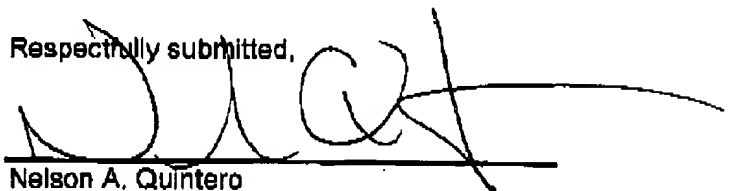
New claims 33-34 recites an inflatable product including, *inter alia*, a switch circuit through which the air pump is activated, wherein the switch circuit has an air bulb and a pressure switch, and the pressure switch is turned on by the air bulb to activate the air pump when the air bulb is pressed. It is applicant's belief that, when taken alone or in combination, none of prior art cited by the Examiner teaches or suggests an inflatable product having all of the limitations recited in new claims 33-34. Support for claims 33-34 can be found on page 11, line 19 to page 12, line 18 of the specification and in Figures 7A-7G.

As the number of independent claims (4) and total claims (9) now pending is less than the number of independent claims (6) and total claims (28) originally paid for, it is Applicant's belief that no fee for extra claims is due with this amendment. Applicant submits that no new matter has been added.

Conclusion

The Applicant believes that the application is now in condition for allowance and respectfully requests so. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 502447. In particular, if this response is not timely filed, then the commissioner is authorized to treat this response as including a petition to extend the time period pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a) requesting an extension of time of the number of months necessary to make this response timely filed and the petition fee due in connection therewith may be charged to Deposit Account No. 502447.

Respectfully submitted,



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